

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 249573

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. RECONCILIATION POSSIBLE BETWEEN EGYPT AND JORDAN?

EMBASSY CAIRO REPORTS THAT JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER RIFAI ARRIVED IN EGYPT OCTOBER 19 IN RESPONSE TO WHAT THE PRESS CALLED "THE REQUEST OF PRESIDENT SADAT." AMBASSADOR EILTS, PRESENT IN A ROOM ADJACENT TO WHERE THE TWO LEADERS WERE MEETING, HEARD THE PRESIDENT SHOUTING ACRIMONIOUSLY FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME. A JORDANIAN EMBASSY OFFICER, COMMENTING THAT RIFAI LEFT RELATIVELY HAPPY WITH HIS MEETING, SAID:

--THE JORDANIANS WERE IMPRESSED BY SADAT'S REPEATED ASSERTIONS THAT ONLY HUSSEIN CAN NEGOTIATE FOR THE WEST BANK.

--SINCE RIFAI'S STAB AT MEDIATING BETWEEN CAIRO AND DAMASCUS HAS FAILED TOTALLY, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY HE WILL
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TRY AGAIN.

--THE JORDANIANS FOUND INTERESTING THE URGENCY WITH WHICH THE EGYPTIANS ARE SEEKING ARAB ALLIES.

EMBASSY COMMENT: FROM FAHMI'S COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR EILTS, WE ASSUME THE MAJOR SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION WAS EGYPTIAN DIS-SATISFACTION WITH THE SYRIAN-JORDANIAN POLITICAL "FRONT."
(CONFIDENTIAL) CAIRO 10534, 10/20.)

2. SYRIA TO MEND FENCES WITH IRAQ?

EMBASSY DAMASCUS FORWARDS A MENA CAIRO REPORT THAT SYRIA HAS GIVEN IRAQI AIRWAYS PERMISSION TO RESUME FLIGHTS TO SYRIA AND TO REOPEN ITS DAMASCUS OFFICE. A KUWAITI PRESS REPORT OCTOBER 18 CLAIMED THAT SYRIA IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING UNITY WITH IRAQ AND THAT ASAD IS READY TO RECONSIDER SYRIA'S ACCEPTANCE OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 IF THIS WOULD FACILITATE SUCH A MOVE.

EMBASSY COMMENT: NEITHER OF THESE NEWS ITEMS HAS RECEIVED ANY MENTION IN THE LOCAL PRESS. NOR, APPARENTLY, HAS THERE AS YET BEEN ANY POSITIVE IRAQI REACTION TO SYRIA'S DESIRE FOR RECONCILIATION. AS OF A FEW DAYS AGO, IRAQ WAS STILL ACCUSING SYRIA OF FLAGRANT INTERVENTION IN LEBANESE AFFAIRS.
(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) DAMASCUS 4066, 10/20.) INGERSOLL

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